Difference between Wildlife Sanctuary, National Park & Tiger Reserve

The primary difference between the three categories is the extent of human presence that is permissible in the area.

1. **Wildlife Sanctuary**
   - Established under s.18 of the Act
   - Pre-existing rights over the land sought to be notified under the Sanctuary are determined by a Collector, under sections 19-26A.
   - Crucially, for a national park, where persons have pre-existing rights in the land, three options are available to the Collector:
     - The Collector may exclude such land from the area of the sanctuary
     - The Land may be acquired by the State
     - **The rights be allowed to continue, subject to the permission of the Chief Wildlife Warden**
   - **Thus, persons may continue to enjoy immovable property rights in land that falls within a Wildlife Sanctuary.**
   - **Restriction on Entry: Under s.27 of the Act, there is a restriction on entry into a Wildlife Sanctuary,** except by a public servant, persons passing through on a highway, persons with immovable rights in the property, **and where permission has been granted by the Chief Wildlife Officer (under s.28)**.
   - **Prohibition on damage, causing fire, littering, etc:** Sections 27-33A also prohibit damage, destruction, exploitation, etc of the area notified as a Wildlife Sanctuary.

2. **National Parks**
   - National Parks are declared by State Governments under s.35(1).
   - Generally, all the protections available to a Wildlife Sanctuary (viz. entry, prohibition of damage, etc) – are extended to National Parks by s.35(8).
   - The **crucial difference** between Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks is that at the time of declaration of the National Park, during the determination of pre-existing rights of persons in the land sought to be declared as a National Park, **the Collector as per s.35(3) has only two options, i.e. to acquire the land; or to carve out that portion of land from the Sanctuary.**
   - **Immovable rights in the land cannot continue with persons, after the declaration of the area as a National Park. The land must vest with the State.**

3. **Tiger Reserves**
   - Under Explanation (i) to s.38V of the Wildlife Protection Act, are required **to be kept *inviolate*- i.e. completely free from human presence.**
   - Similarly, section 38V(2) also provides that the provisions applicable to Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks, **that allow the limited entry of humans (with the prior permission of the Wildlife Warden) – will not apply in cases of Tiger Reserves.**

Key Protection Available to Area Upon Declaration of Area as Tiger Reserve

1. **Tiger Reserve will be mandatorily made inviolate – and even the limited entry permissible into areas that are already declared as Wildlife Sanctuary/National Park – will no longer be allowed.**

2. **Funds from the Tiger Conservation Authority will be made available, under s.38O r/w s/38Q(3) of the Act, for the following purposes:**

- *To ……"(b) evaluate and assess various aspects of sustainable ecology and disallow any ecologically unsustainable land use such as, mining, industry and other projects within the tiger reserves;*
- *(c) lay down normative standards for tourism activities and guidelines for project tiger from time to time for tiger conservation in the buffer and core area of tiger reserves and ensure their due compliance;*
- ***(d) provide for management focus and measures for addressing conflicts of men and wild animals and to emphasise on co-existence in forest areas outside the National Parks, sanctuaries or tiger reserve, in the working plan code;***
- *(e) provide information on protection measures including future conservation plan, estimation of population of tiger and its natural prey species, status of habitats, disease surveillance, mortality survey, patrolling, reports on untoward happenings and such other management aspects as it may deem fit including future plan conservation;*
- ***(f) approve, co-ordinate research and monitoring on tiger, co-predators, prey, habitat, related ecological and socio-economic parameters and their evaluation;***
- ***(g) ensure that the tiger reserves and areas linking one protected area or tiger reserve with another protected area or tiger reserve are not diverted for ecologically unsustainable uses, except in public interest and with the approval of the National Board for Wild Life and on the advice of the Tiger Conservation Authority;***
- ***(h) facilitate and support the tiger reserve management in the State for biodiversity conservation initiatives through eco-development and people's participation as per approved management plans and to support similar initiatives in adjoining areas consistent with the Central and State laws;***
- ***(i) ensure critical support including scientific, information technology and legal support for better implementation of the tiger conservation plan;***
- *(j) facilitate ongoing capacity building programme for skill development of officers and staff of tiger reserves; and*
- ***(k) perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act with regard to conservation of tigers and their habitat."***

3. State Government will have to prepare a **Tiger Conservation Plan** including staff development and deployment plan for the proper management of each area under s.38V(3) of the Act, to provide for: —

   (a) protection of tiger reserve and **providing site specific habitat inputs** for a viable population of tigers, co-predators and prey animals without distorting the natural prey-predator ecological cycle in the habitat;

   (b) **ecologically compatible land uses** in the tiger reserves and **areas linking one protected area or tiger reserve with another for addressing the livelihood concerns of local people**, so as to provide dispersal habitats and corridor for spill over population of wild animals from the designated core areas of tiger reserves or from tiger breeding habitats within other protected areas;

   (c) the forestry operations of regular forest divisions and those adjoining tiger reserves **are not incompatible with the needs of tiger conservation**.

4. Finally, the State Government will, under s.38X of the Act, have to constitute a **Tiger Conservation Foundation** – which will be a state level committee constituted for the sole protection and facilitation of the Tiger Reserve.

5. **Further, as per the National Tiger Conservation Authority's Website, the NTCA provides financial and technical support to Tiger Reserves, as well as a <u>Voluntary Village Resettlement Program.</u>**

- **Financial Support**
    - An ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS-PT) provides funding support to the tiger reserves under two broad categories namely: the 'Non Recurring' and Recurring' activities.
    - Some of the activities covered under '**Non Recurring**' category are: strengthening of protection, deployment of armed squads in tiger reserves, creating basic infrastructure
      for management, roads, wireless, civil works, habitat development,augmenting water resources, compensatory ameliorative measures for habitat restoration, eco-development, village relocation etc.
    - The '**Recurring**' activities considered for funding are: creation / deployment of local work force for patrolling/barriers,habitat improvement, providing salt licks, water facility, fire protection measures, maintenance of various items, publicity and extension and legal assistance

- **Technical Support** is also provided in the following areas:
    - Approval of Tiger Conservation Plans
    - Formulation of normative standards for tourism activities and guidelines
    - Approve, coordinate research and monitoring of tiger, co-predators, prey and habitat
    - Assessment of infrastructure/ developmental projects within the tiger reserves
    - Capacity building and skill development of tiger reserve officials and staff
    - Standard Operating Procedures for managing the conflict situations, tiger mortality, active management and other thematic areas.

- **Voluntary Village Rehabilitation Program**, where the proposed packages are:
    - **Option I**– Payment of the entire package amount (**<u>Rs. 10 lakhs per family</u>**) to the family in case the family opts so, without involving any rehabilitation / relocation process by the Forest Department.
    - **Option II**– Carrying out relocation / rehabilitation of village from protected area / tiger reserve by the Forest Department. The amounts proposed, at the rate of Rs. 10 lakhs per family, under Option II are:

      (a) Agriculture land procurement (2 hectare) and development : 35% of the total package

      (b) Settlement of rights : 30% of the total package

      (c) Homestead land and house construction : 20% of the total package

      (d) Incentive : 5% of the total package

      (e) Community facilities commuted by the family (access road, irrigation, drinking water, sanitation, electricity, telecommunication, community center, religious places of worship, burial/cremation ground) : 10% of the total package.

For implementing voluntary village relocation program, the **<u>NTAC has so far spent Rs 577.64 crores</u> for the period 2014-15 to 2020-21.*